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December and January, when cassava is usually plentiful, a spree is held very frequently. During my first four weeks in Sawari, for instance, six sprees were held in the settlement. These festivities are "given" in each case by individual households for the benefit of guests. Such an arrangement is in line with the typically individualistic orientation of practically all aspects of Carib life. The women of the household which is acting as host prepare the drink and during the spree act as waitresses, serving the liquor to guests in calabash vessels. I have described the details of these jollifications in the chapter on amusements, but the important fact in the present connection is that for the persons present at one of these functions, the communal ties are strengthened at the expense of individual ties.

The Caribs are normally fairly reticent with each other concerning their personal affairs; the fundamental philosophy of "every man for himself" rules the daily life of the people; but under the benign influence of alcohol, combined with singing and dancing, much of this reserve breaks down. At these periodic jollifications the members of the group pool their feelings and interests. The following points may make this clearer. Joking and talk arise during the early stages of the spree. Much of the conversation deals with personal matters which under other circumstances would not be discussed. Individual relaxation is also seen in the communal use of articles, such as tobacco, food, hammocks, clothing, which during ordinary times are strictly private. The appropriation of other individuals' partners in adulterous connections, which occurs in the evening, although not condoned by cuckolded husbands, is approved in general and shows a merging of private interests into those of the group. A spree is usually held when a visiting party arrives in the settlement, thus exhibiting unity through extension of group hospitality. The fact that Cook and his group were eventually excluded from participation in the sprees of Miller's clearing gives visible form to the drawing of boundaries about those who "belong," and indicates the growth of a rift in settlement life. The fact that the dispute itself between Miller and Cook arose during a spree illustrates the manner in which the spree serves as a clearing house for social forces. Cook's group defends its position by holding sprees of its own

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from which the others are excluded, thus building up its own solidarity. 527 156

Summary. In summarizing the situation in Sawari we are justified in concluding, I believe, that the most important factors of unity are blood relationship, relationship by marriage, friendship, and economic opportunity. 182

The factors which tend to disrupt the unity of the settlement are personal dislike, insufficient economic opportunity, death, and divorce.

Leadership of the community is here based on personality, intelligence, initiative, physical ability, and relationship. Thus Miller, the headman of the whole village, was the first man to cut a field in this vicinity, thereby giving a demonstration of his initiative, physical ability, and intelligence. He attracted a group of friends and relatives about him, who on account of all these factors were willing to submit to his authority, such as it is. The same factors are seen to be at work in the off-shoot group represented by Cook's clearing with Cook as its leader. Children and youths are subordinate to adults, but among the latter such inequality as exists is based on personal factors. 554 622

Sawari, therefore, like the other Carib villages on the Barama, is a local grouping of families, united around a leader for the reasons mentioned above. No single factor is alone operative in bringing together such a group, no single factor can be said to be the exclusive cause of its disintegration.

The balance between the forces of unity and of disintegration in a Carib settlement is exceedingly delicate. The membership is continually shifting, and the life of an average settlement is apparently comparatively short. Sawari was founded perhaps ten years ago by Miller, after his sojourn in the toils of the law. It is still growing, but in a fluctuating fashion. Many of the newly married residents have been members for only a year or two. Joseph (David's son) joins the settlement, Henry (Caroline's husband) leaves in the space of a few months. It is quite likely that further additions and subtractions will take place at about this rate until the settlement for one reason or another is finally abandoned. 182